(b) if so, the steps proposed to carry out repairs to defunct borewells and other water sources in those areas particularly for supply of adequate drinking water to the tribal people of the areas and to other tribal areas of country in general?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA): (a) No report indicating acute shortage of drinking water has been received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

(b) The State Government have reported that every action is being taken to attend to the repair of defunct borewells and other drinking water sources, by engaging mobile maintenance terms for supply of adequate drinking water to all the habitations including the tribal ones.

Releasing of Additional Funds to Andhra Pradesh Under JRY

4202. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether additional funds of Rs. 138.00 crores under JRY have not yet been released for Andhra Pradesh as agreed to; and

(b) whether it is a fact that a large number of labour intensive works in the rural areas were undertaken to provide gainful employment to the landless agricultural labourers in Andhra Pradesh, if so, whether funds would be released during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA): (a) and (b) Central assistance under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) is allocated to all the States/Union Territories on the basis of proportion of rural poor in a State/UT to the total rural poor in the country. The poverty estimates prepared by the Planning Commission are used for this purpose. The Central assistance under JRY has been released to the State Government of Andhra Pradesh as per their allocation and entitlement. Additional assistance is given only under special circumstances and that too if savings are available during that particular financial year, on receipt of proposals for additional funds.

Under JRY labour intensive works can only be taken by spending 60% of the allocation on wages. During the current year an amount of Rs. 46.59 crores as Central assistance have been released against the tentative central allocation of Rs. 155.28 crores to Andhra Pradesh.

Viability of National Social Benefit Scheme

4203. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Social Benefit Scheme for elderly destitutes families in distress and poor pregnant women, has proved a non-strater;

(b) if so, the reasons for not getting applications for financial aid from any category; and

(c) the measures proposed to end bureaucratic apathy and make the scheme viable?

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THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir. During 1995-96 and 1996-97, 32 lakh and 41 lakh beneficiaries respectively were assisted under the National Old Age Pension Scheme, 8 lakh poor pregnant women respectively were assisted under the National maternity Benefit Scheme.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Ensuring response from State Governments on Drinking Water Projects

4204. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received requests for drinking water projects in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that proper response and project details are not tendered by the Andhra Pradesh Government in response to the queries;

(c) the steps Government propose to ensure better response from State Governments in such matters; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT(SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) After technical scurtiny of the projects by a team of experts, the State Government is requested either to furnish certain addition/clarification or to modify and submit and projects for further processing and clearance. It is a fact that at times and modification of the projects take some time. Since the initiative is taken by the State Government in getting the projects approved, no avoidable delay has been observed on the part of the State Government in the matter.

Increase in LPCD Norms

4205. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it was agreed to increase the LPCD norms from 40 LPCD to 55 LPCD and allow 30 per cent private house connections in the Chief Ministers' meeting convened by the Prime Minister on the 4th July, 1996 in New Delhi;

(b) if so, the steps taken for implementation of the decisions;

(c) if no steps have been taken so far, the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA): (a) The Chief Minister's Conference held on 4-5 July, 19% had recommended that the present norms of 40 LPCD be revised to 55 LPCD.

(b) to (d) It is proposed to implement the above recommendation, after providing safe drinking water facilities as per the existing need to all the 'Not Covered' and 'Partially Covered' habitations.

Schemes for Upliftment of Rural Artisans

4206. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes formulated/ implemented for the upliftment of rural artisans, so far, scheme-wise and State-wise;

(b) the additional facilities proposed to be provided to them during 1997-98; and

(c) the names of items manufactured under the said schemes during the last two years and the countries to which these items were exported?

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